



Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

Newsletter for the Initiative
August 27, 2003

News and information specific to the Waterbird Conservation for the Americas initiative, the partnership that developed the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan.

Keeping In Touch

Please forward this newsletter to other potentially interested parties.

Those interested in receiving this and other waterbird initiative postings can join the listserv (automated email list) for the initiative "WaterbirdsNetwork" (formerly known as "nawcpadvisorycommittee") This list is open to any interested parties and is generally for announcements warranting immediate distribution. New members can join by sending a blank email to Join-WaterbirdsNetwork@rana.er.usgs.gov.

WEBSITE: <http://www.waterbirdconservation.org>

Continental Activities

Waterbird Conservation Council Structure

This group met for the first time on June 4 and 5, 2003 in Reston, Virginia, USA. Here are extracts from the Terms of Reference developed at the meeting:

- The Waterbird Conservation Council (Council) is the keeper of the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan (NAWCP) and has responsibility for coordinating, supporting, and communicating implementation of NAWCP, other waterbird plans, updating the plans, and facilitating actions for waterbird conservation throughout the Plan area.
- The Executive Committee will be composed of nine persons. Five will be "geographic" Vice-Chairs representing Canada, U.S., Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. The Chair and Chair-Elect for the Council will be selected from these five Vice-Chairs. The four additional members of the Executive Committee will be the Past Chair of the Council as well as three Council members selected by the five Vice-Chairs for their knowledge and experience with current priority action areas. The Executive Committee members will serve two-year terms.
- Current Executive Council: Kathy Parsons, Chair (U.S. rep.); Eric Mellink, Chair Elect (Mexico rep.); Gerry McKeating (Canada rep.); Ghisselle Alvarado (Central American rep.); Eric Carey (Caribbean rep.); Jim Kushlan (Past Chair); Pat Patterson; Melanie Steinkamp; Ian Davidson.

- Council members may participate on standing committees or on ad-hoc committees created by the Council to address specific issues. Committees may decide to include non-Council persons in their membership. The standing committees are:
 - o Technical Services Committee
 - o Regional Planning and Implementation Committee
 - o Communications and Marketing Committee
 - o Resources Committee
 - o International Advancement Committee
 - o Conservation Action Committee
 - o Nominations Committee
- The Council will strive to obtain consensus on all issues and to work cooperatively to advance waterbird conservation. When consensus is not possible, additional information will be gathered before a decision or action is taken.

Regional Activities

Jennifer Wheeler can provide contact information, copies of most drafts, and additional details.

Northern Prairie and Parkland – (BCR 11 adjusted)

Contacts:

Gerry Beyersbergen, gerard.beyersbergen@ec.gc.ca, 780-951-8670

Neal Niemuth, neal_niemuth@fws.gov, 701-250-4413

With the integration of final comments from the regional planning committee – many of which are now returning from summer field work – the NPP Region Waterbird Conservation Plan will be available for public release.

One of the priority information needs discussed in the draft NPP Plan is an understanding of the role that small wetlands play in providing critical habitat for breeding and migrating waterbirds. A recent report “Marshbird, shorebird, and songbird use of small wetlands in Alberta” by Norton, Gingras and Puchniak describes a study to quantify broad-scale habitat relationships of wetland-associated birds at small wetlands. This information will help direct future conservation efforts, including identification of “priority areas.” A fairly extensive literature review is also included in the report. For more information on this study, a nice example of how information needs for multiple bird groups can be gathered by one integrated program, please write Mike Norton, Mike.Norton@EC.gc.ca.

Intermountain West – (U.S. portions of BCRs 9, 10, 15, 16)

Contact:

Gary Ivey, 541-929-7397, ivey@oregonvos.net

The draft plan for the Intermountain West is in its third iteration. Gary Ivey, contracted to lead the production of the plan, is attending graduate school at Oregon State University, but is incorporating comments to develop population and habitat objectives — the end product of the planning process. Gary expects to ask for review of objectives and State support of them in late September, and release the final plan by the end of the year.

Upper Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes (UMVGL) - (BCRs 12, 13, 22, 23, 24)

Contact:

Linda Wires, (612) 624-2297, wires001@maroon.tc.umn.edu

Through an agreement between the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the University of Minnesota, Linda Wires, Research Associate in the Dept. Fisheries, Wildlife & Conservation Biology, has been contracted to lead the development of the UMVGL Waterbird Conservation Plan. She is now compiling data and other technical information in partnership with the UMVGL Waterbird Conservation Plan Co-chairs (with USFWS, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Ohio and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources). Progress on the UMVGL waterbird conservation plan thus far includes development of species seasonal occurrence lists for each state/province within each BCR, identification and contact with key individuals for each state and province in planning area, and development of a questionnaire to obtain population data from each state/province.

Linda is currently reviewing material and trying to obtain information on waterbird habitat availability and abundance within the UMVGL region. Fortunately, a number of meetings are providing Linda with the Opportunity to interact directly with partners to share information, including a Wisconsin All-Bird Meeting last February; All-Bird conservation meetings in both Michigan and Minnesota in October, and the Midwest Fish and Wildlife conference (Kansas City, Missouri, December 7-10, 2003). Moreover, Linda will be participating in the effort by partners in the Central Hardwoods BCR (BCR 24) to develop population goals and habitat objectives — an effort which benefits planning for the entire region. A draft version of the plan is scheduled for February 1, 2004, and a due date of July 1, 2004 has been set for production of the final plan report.

Pacific Coast - (BCRs 5, 32, and California Current)

Planning is proceeding for BCR 32, BCR 5 and the California Current via a collection of efforts.

The California Current System Marine Bird Adaptive Conservation Plan -

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Kyra Mills, 415-868-1221x21, kyramills@prbo.org

The CCS Plan is a long-term conservation of Pacific seabirds and the ecosystem that supports them. A meeting concerning seabird/ecosystem protection of the northern California Current System (CCS)—Oregon, Washington, and Canada—will be held at the University of Washington in Seattle on September 15th and 16th, 2003. A similar meeting covering the southern CCS—Mexico and California—will be held in California in November. The organization of the northern CCS meeting is a collaborative effort of PRBO Conservation Science (formerly Point Reyes Bird Observatory), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). The goals of the meeting are to jointly develop a “conservation action agenda” to be included in the CCS plan and to discuss the best tools for implementation of this agenda. These will be integrated into the first draft of the Plan due December 2003.

Southeast U.S. – (BCRs 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 36, 37, Gulf of Mexico, Southeast U.S. Continental Shelf)

Contacts:

Chuck Hunter, 404-679-7130, Chuck_Hunter@fws.gov

Walker Golder, 910-798-8376, wgolder@audubon.org

Information compilation is underway, including drafting of species profiles and listing of key sites. Regional leads are also in consultation with States to develop population estimates and objectives. Fol-

lowing review of data by stakeholders (a public draft is anticipated late this year), the planning process will move towards consensus on priorities and objectives.

Of note: Chuck Hunter has begun to transition from the Migratory Bird Program to a new job as Regional Refuge Biologist position (which in Region 4 has the title Chief, Division of Resource Management). Fortunately, Chuck will continue as waterbird regional co-chair in his new position.

Mid-Atlantic/New England/Maritimes – (BCRs 14, 30, Scotian Shelf, Northeast U.S. Continental Shelf)

Contacts:

Scott Johnson, 413-253-8557, Scott_Johnston@fws.gov

Kathy Parsons, 508, 224, 6521, x229, parsonsk@manomet.org

During the past several months, details of the MANEM Plan information content and presentation have been finalized with working group members. Species profiles for the 74 species of waterbird are now under review by approximately 30 regional ornithologists. Also, habitat profiles (important waterbird areas) and site survey data for parts of the 10 states and 4 provinces in the region are under development. These elements must be reviewed and improved by state wildlife biologists and other government and private land managers.

Many of the files are available at <http://birds.fws.gov/regionalplanninginternal/MANEM/>

Central Prairies – (BCRs 17, 18, 19)

This region does not yet have a comprehensive regional planning effort, however, planning for BCRs 18 and 19 of the Central Prairies region is underway through the leadership and cooperation of Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV) and Rainwater Basin Joint Venture (RBJV).

BCRs 18 and 19

Contact:

Christopher Rustay, (505) 266-6968, Chrustay@aol.com

The PLJV, planning for BCR 18, is working with RBJV on BCR 19, using the PLJV Species for Management Action (SMA) database, which catalogs species that occur within the planning area. It includes information stepped down from national or continental plans and derived from regional literature and/or regional experts, to identify species for management action. Management actions can include: enhancing current monitoring techniques (Breeding Bird Survey, Christmas Bird Count), expanding or developing appropriate monitoring (such as Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's Colony Watch), education needs (developing Best Management Practices for land managers, or education on prairie birds for the general public), as well as providing habitat conservation. Proposed population objectives, for those species determined to require management action, will be sent to regional experts to review and improve. Workshops to determine the most significant information gaps and next step planning are next. A first-phase GIS will be available in October for partner planning. The PLJV will be launching a new section on its website and electronic newsletter for the planning community. Details will be available in the September "Playa Post". Those interested in receiving this may contact Debbie Slobe at debbie.slobe@pljv.org

Caribbean

Contact:

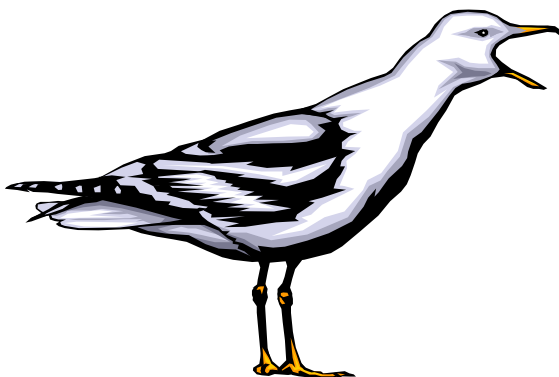
Ann Haynes Sutton, 876-816-5809, asutton@cwjamaica.com

The planning effort for the Caribbean region is a project of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB). The waterbirds planning initiative covers all aquatic birds (waterfowl, shore-bird, waterbird) and is viewed as a process that will allow the SCSCB to coordinate its efforts with international initiatives and increase awareness of the need for waterbird conservation in the region. The main output of the plan is envisioned as a proposal for a major project or series of projects addressing key areas of emphasis. Details for such a project/projects were fleshed out at the recent SCSCB meeting held in Tobago in July.

For More News

More information relevant to waterbird and wetland conservation can be found in the **NEWSLINK — A Compilation of Migratory Bird & Wetland News from Around the World**. To subscribe, contact Heidi Luquer, luquer@vermontel.net. Past issues of NEWSLINK are posted at <http://aswm.org/wetlandsnewslink/index.html>]

For news from other bird initiatives, subscribe to the **All-Bird Bulletin**. Write Roxanne Bogart, Roxanne_Bogart@fws.gov. Past issues of the All-Bird Bulletin are posted on the US NABCI Web Site at <http://www.nabci-us.org/news.html>].



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